

**March 22, 2010**

**WASHINGTON, DC** - U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24) issued the following statement today after voting against health care legislation considered by the House of Representatives last evening.

"There is no question that we must fix our nation's broken health care system. Over the past several months, I have received tens of thousands of phone calls, faxes and emails, and I have spoken with small business owners, medical professionals, local health care providers and families all across Upstate New York. The message is clear - while we need real health care reform, we can and we must do better for Upstate New York.

"I believe the health care bill I voted against yesterday will raise health care insurance premiums and costs for the hundreds of thousands of families, seniors and small businesses in my district who already have insurance.

"My specific reasons for voting against this health care bill include:

- **Includes an excise tax on high-quality health insurance plans**, which would unfairly punish middle class families and small businesses who already have good health insurance plans;
- **Fails to create competition among health insurance companies and lower costs** - does not repeal the anti-trust exemptions enjoyed by insurance companies that currently limit health insurance options;
- **Fails to reduce the cost of prescription drugs**. Does not allow Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices - something the VA has been doing successfully for years;
- **Puts more people on Medicaid**, which would place additional financial strain on

state and county budgets and could lead to property tax increases;

- **Cuts Medicare and Medicaid payments to hospitals**, which already operate in the red from year to year due to existing under reimbursement by these programs. Hospitals are already cutting jobs and services due to underfunding from Medicare and Medicaid - these cuts will make the situation worse.

"My greatest fear is that under this legislation middle class families and senior citizens in my district will see their insurance premiums sky-rocket even more and that small businesses will be forced to cut costs by either slashing benefits or laying-off employees.

"At the end of the day, voting in opposition to this bill was the only common sense, responsible approach, and the only one that my conscience would allow based on the concerns of families and small businesses in our region of Upstate New York. Although I could not support this bill, I will continue to work tirelessly to institute reforms that will benefit those of my constituents who don't have health insurance as well as those who do have insurance."

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